**CONTENTS**

Introduction

1. Who Was Saint Valentine ?
2. The History of Saint Valentine's Day
3. Valentine Traditions
4. **Early Valentine Customs**
5. Valentine Symbols:
   1. Cupid
   2. Hearts and Arrows
   3. Lovebirds
   4. Valentine’s Cards
   5. Roses
   6. Daisies, Violets and Bachelor Buttons
   7. Say It With Flowers...
   8. Sweetheart, Sugar Pie, Honey etc.
   9. Chocolate
   10. Love Knots
   11. Paper Hands
   12. Valentine Lace
6. Saint Valentine’s Poems

**Introduction**

St. Valentine’s day is the holiday of all the sweethearts.

It’s celebrated on February 14 all around the world. It is the traditional day on which lovers express their love for each other by sending Valentine’s cards, different presents, sweets, flowers, or offering confectionary.

Ever since St. Valentine died on February 14, 269 AD, people have been giving their loved ones Valentines and roses and other things to show their feelings toward them. They do that because of what Valentine did. Some people believe that when Valentine died, he left a note to the jail keeper's daughter which was signed, "Your Valentine." People have been doing that since then-- once they knew that St. Valentine had done it.

1. **Who Was Saint Valentine?**

St. Valentine was a great Christian who worked as a priest and a noble man. When St. Valentine was alive, the Roman Emperor, Claudius II, would arrest the Christians. If the Christians didn't change their religion, they would either be crucified, thrown to lions, or beheaded . One legend says that St. Valentine would visit the jail every day to taIk and to pray with the prisoners to help them to get out safely.

After a period of time, the jail keepers got suspicious and asked him a few questions. That is when they found out that St. Valentine was a Christian soo they threw him in prison where he stayed without changing his religion. Finally he was beheaded on February 14, 269 A.D. After St Valentine's death, a church was named after him, which was a hiding place under his grave for Christians, and a public city gate, Porta Valetini (now called Porta del Popolo), was also named after him.

II. The History of Saint Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day started in the time of the Roman Empire. In ancient Rome, February 14th was a holiday to honour Juno. Juno was the Queen of the Roman Gods and Goddesses. The Romans also knew her as the Goddess of women and marriage. The following day, February 15th, began the Feast of Lupercalia.

The lives of young boys and girls were strictly separate. However, one of the customs of the young people was name drawing. On the eve of the festival of Lupercalia the names of Roman girls were written on slips of paper and placed into jars. Each young man would draw a girl's name from the jar and would then be partners for the duration of the festival with the girl whom he chose. Sometimes the pairing of the children lasted an entire year, and often, they would fall in love and would later marry.

Under the rule of Emperor Claudius II Rome was involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns. Claudius the Cruel was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. He believed that the reason was that roman men did not want to leave their loves or families. As a result, Claudius cancelled all marriages and engagements in Rome. The good Saint Valentine was a priest at Rome in the days of Claudius II. He and Saint Marius aided the Christian martyrs and secretly married couples, and for this kind deed Saint Valentine was apprehended and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who condemned him to be beaten to death with clubs and to have his head cut off. He suffered martyrdom on the 14th day of February, about the year 270. At that time it was the custom in Rome, a very ancient custom, indeed, to celebrate in the month of February the Lupercalia, feasts in honour of a heathen god. On these occasions, amidst a variety of pagan ceremonies, the names of young women were placed in a box, from which they were drawn by the men as chance directed.

The pastors of the early Christian Church in Rome endeavoured to do away with the pagan element in these feasts by substituting the names of saints for those of maidens. And as the Lupercalia began about the middle of February, the pastors appear to have chosen Saint Valentine's Day for the celebration of this new feaSt. So it seems that the custom of young men choosing maidens for valentines, or saints as patrons for the coming year, arose in this way.

III. Valentine Traditions

1. Hundreds of years ago in England, many children dressed up as adults on Valentine's Day. They went singing from home to home. One verse they sang was: Good morning to you, valentine; Curl your locks as I do mine. Two before and three behind. Good morning to you, valentine.

2. In Wales wooden love spoons were carved and given as gifts on February 14th. Hearts, keys and keyholes were favourite decorations on the spoons. The decoration meant, "You unlock my heart!"

3. In the Middle Ages, young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who their valentines would be. They would wear these names on their sleeves for one week. To wear your heart on your sleeve now means that it is easy for other people to know how you are feeling.

4. In some countries, a young woman may receive a gift of clothing from a young man. If she keeps the gift, it means she will marry him.

5. Some people used to believe that if a woman saw a robin flying overhead on Valentine's Day, it meant she would marry a sailor. If she saw a sparrow, she would marry a poor man and be very happy. If she saw a goldfinch, she would marry a millionaire.

6. A love seat is a wide chair. It was first made to seat one woman and her wide dress. Later, the love seat or courting seat had two sections, often in an S-shape. In this way, a couple could sit together – but not too closely!

7. Think of five or six names of boys or girls you might marry, As you twist the stem of an apple, recite the names until the stem comes off. You will marry the person whose name you were saying when the stem fell off.

8. Pick a dandelion that has gone to seed. Take a deep breath and blow the seeds into the wind. Count the seeds that remain on the stem. That is the number of children you will have.

9. If you cut an apple in half and count how many seeds are inside, you will also know how many children you will have.

**IV. Early Valentine Customs**

**People in England probably celebrated Valentine's Day as early as the 1400's. Some historians trace the custom of sending verses on Valentine's Day to a Frenchman named Charles, Duke of Orleans. Charles was captured by the English during the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. He was taken to England and put in prison. On Valentine's Day, he sent his wife a rhymed love letter from his cell in the Tower of London.**

**Many Valentine's Day customs involved ways that single women could learn who their future husbands would be. Englishwomen of the 1700's wrote men's names on scraps of paper, rolled each in a little piece of clay, and dropped them all into water. The first paper that rose to the surface supposedly had the name of a woman's true love.**

**Also in the 1700's, unmarried women pinned five bay leaves to their pillows on the eve of Valentine's Day. They pinned one leaf to the center of the pillow and one to each corner. If the charm worked, they saw their future husbands in their dreams.**

**In Derbyshire, a county in central England, young women circled the church 3 or 12 times at midnight and repeated such verses as:**

**I sow hempseed. Hempseed I sow. He that loves me best, Come after me now.**

**Their true loves then supposedly appeared.**

**One of the oldest customs was the practice of writing women's names on slips of paper and drawing them from a jar. The woman whose name was drawn by a man became his valentine, and he paid special attention to her. Many men gave gifts to their valentines. In some areas, a young man gave his valentine a pair of gloves. Wealthy men gave fancy balls to honor their valentines.**

**One description of Valentine's Day during the 1700's tells how groups of friends met to draw names. For several days, each man wore his valentine's name on his sleeve. The saying wearing his heart on his sleeve probably came from this practice.**

**The custom of sending romantic messages gradually replaced that of giving gifts. In the 1700's and 1800's, many stores sold handbooks called valentine writers. These books included verses to copy and various suggestions about writing valentines.**

**Commercial valentines were first made in the early 1800's. Many of them were blank inside, with space for the sender to write a message. The British artist Kate Greenaway became famous for her valentines in the late 1800's. Many of her cards featured charming pictures of happy children and lovely gardens.**

**Esther A. Howland, of Worcester, Massachusetts, became one of the first U.S. manufacturers of valentines. In 1847, after seeing a British valentine, she decided to make some of her own. She made samples and took orders from stores. Then she hired a staff of young women and set up an assembly line to produce the cards. One woman glued on paper flowers, another added lace, and another painted leaves. Howland soon expanded her business into a $100,000-a-year enterprise.**

**Many valentines of the 1800's were hand painted. Some featured a fat cupid or showed arrows piercing a heart. Many cards had satin, ribbon, or lace trim. Others were decorated with dried flowers, feathers, imitation jewels, mother-of-pearl, sea shells, or tassels. Some cards cost as much as $10.**

**From the mid-1800's to the early 1900's, many people sent comic valentines called penny dreadfuls. These cards sold for a penny and featured such insulting verses as:**

**'Tis all in vain your simpering looks, You never can incline, With all your bustles, stays, and curls, To find a valentine.**

**Many penny dreadfuls and other old valentines have become collectors' items.**

**Valentine, Saint, is the name associated with two martyrs of the early Christian church. Little is known about them. The Roman history of martyrs lists two Saint Valentines as having been martyred on February 14 by being beheaded. One supposedly died in Rome and the other at Interamna, now Terni, 60 miles (97 kilometers) from Rome. Scholars have had great difficulty in finding historical fact among the Saint Valentine legends.**

**The Saint Valentine who died in Rome seems to have been a priest who suffered death during the persecution of Claudius the Goth about A.D. 269. A basilica was built in his honor in Rome in A.D. 350, and a catacomb containing his remains was found on this location.**

**Another history of martyrs mentions a Saint Valentine who was bishop of Interamna and who may have been martyred in Rome. By being remembered both in Rome and in Interamna, he may have come to be considered as two people, but this is not entirely certain.**

**The custom of exchanging valentines on February 14 can be traced to the English poet, Geoffrey Chaucer. He mentioned that birds began to pair off on that day."**

**V. Valentine Symbols**

**5.1. Cupid**

Cupid is the Roman God of Love and the most popular symbol for Valentne's Day. Originally he was shown as a young man with a bow and arrows. But over the years, Cupid went from a handsome man to a pudgey baby? The reason is that the Romans had Cupid as the son of Venus (Goddess of Love and Beauty) and a symbol for passion, playful and tender love.

His arrows were invisible and his victims (which could also include other Gods btw as well as humans) would not be aware that they were shot until they fell in love. But, the Victorian era want to help make Valentine's Day more proper for women and children. So they tossed out this handsome Roman Adonis guy and made cupid more of a chubby baby. In other words, it's all on how you want to spin the story from PG-rated to R-Rated!

**5.2 Hearts and Arrows**

A heart (red or pink) with an arrow piercing through it is the most common shape and look for a Valentines, and even candles, candies, cookies, cakes, figurines, stuffed images, etc. The heart is a symbol both of love and also vulnerability.

When you send someone a Valentine, you take a risk of being rejected and your feelings hurt. So a piercing arrow is a symbol of death and the vulnerability of love. On the other hand, the heart and arrow also symbolize the merging of the male and female as one. In the 12th century, physicians believed that the heart was the seat of love and affection in the human body. But the actual biologicial shape of the human heart does not look like the heart as we see it today. Why? Well, some people are guessing (and it is funny!) that the Valentine heart-shape as we know it today was done by a doodler to represent the human female buttocks or a female torso with well-endowed breasts or the imprint of lips (wearing lipstick) made upon a piece of paper. Once again, it's all on how you want to spin the story!

**5.3 Lovebirds**

As I mentioned above, it was believed that birds chose their mates on February 14. And so the dove was chosen to be the bird representative because it was sacred to the Roman Goddess Venus because it chose a lifelong mate. They also make a cooing sound, which further proved they were the love couple. The dove was also a sacred bird to the Goddess, Venus (and other Love Deities). And Noah had considered the dove to be his messanger. In the Song of Solomon, the word "Turtle" is really referring to the "turtledove." The turtledove is common in Asia and Europe, but it is not found in N. America at all. Since all doves are part of the pigeon family, they mate for life, and the male and female both share in the caring of their young. Their bcooing sounds are often considered "love sounds" and today it is often said that when people in love talk rather sugary and baby-like it is "cooing" with each other.

Dove superstitions are that they were magical and were often used to divine the future. The heart of a dove was often an ingredient in love potions. If you saw a white dove fly overhead it was suppose to be good luck. If you dreamt of a dove it was a sign that you had a promise of happiness. And, if you saw the first dove in Springtime, made a wish, that wish would come true (much like wishing upon a falling star.)

But during the years, love birds have changed from Doves to hummingbirds to birds of paradises. Today, love birds depcited on Valentines are tiny parrots brilliant in color because genetically they really are in the parrot family. They often act like young lovers also. How? They are known for living in pairs and keeping to themselves, much like young lovers want their privacy today. As pets they are considered loveable, easy to tame and respond to affection. Some can even be taught to speak.

The bad side of lovebirds is that they can carry a disease harmful to humans. And so, there are strict rules regarding importing them into the United States.

**5.4 Valentine’s Cards**

The custom of exchanging love notes goes back to the Roman Lupercalia festival with the names being drawn. But the British were the ones who popularized sending your feelings to someone via a printed card. The first Valentine card was created by Chrles, Duke of Orleans, imprisoned in the tower of London for several years following the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. he sent Valentine poems to his wife in France from his jail cell. Commercial Valentines didn't apepar until 1800 (In England) and although handmade cards had been around for years. Inthe 19th century a new kind of Valentine emerged called "penny dreadfuls" that were insulting and cruel rather than loving and flattering. They were mostly sent annonymously too.

In America, hand-made Valentines appeared around 1740 and were sealed with red wax and left secretly on a lover's doorstep (or sent in the mail). Commerical cards for the most part took over around 1880's. But people still (and will always) make homemade ones too. Some included trinkets, some locks of hair and in some cases there were checks that were drawn against "The Bank of Love" and valentines printed to look like money. One was so realistic to a 5 pound note it was quickly recalled!

Valentine verses were romantic, whimsical and critical. As I mentioned above, postage was expensive. And during the English Victorian times the custom was that the recipient paid for the mail they got (not the sender as we do it today). So you can imagine what a double insult it was to pay for a Valentine only to open it up and discover it is critical aka "Vinegar Valentine.

Walter Crane and Kate Greenaway were famous children's book illustrators of their time. At the age of 22, Kate sold her first Valentine design for $15. Within weeks, over 25,000 copies were sold. For a few years after, she kept designing Valentines, but was never paid a penny more. Today, Kate Greenaway Valentine's are considered collectable items, as well as those designed by Walter Crane.

When Valentine Cards got to America, they also got more creative. The first known to come to the US is a note written by John Winthrop in 1629 to his wife before leaving England for the New World. It ended with "My sweet wife, Thou must be my valentine for none hat challenged me." He later became governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Valentines were not only done in delicate pen and ink, but also watercolor and the handwriting also became a thing of beauty for the card as well, as good penmanship was considered a form of art, as well as the quality of a person.

Acrostic Valentines - had verses in which the first letter of the lines spelled out the loved one's name.

Example of the name Amanda.

A - Another moment without you isM - more pain than I can bear.A- And no other love will ever beN - nearer to my heart than yours.D - Days pass slowly until we shall meetA -again and our lives forever share.

Cutout Valentines (which most children do in school today also) were simply made by folding paper several times and then cutting out small areas to make lacelike designs.

Pinprick Valentines were made by pricking tiny paper holes with a pin or needled into the paper into a lovely design.

Theorem or Poonah Valentines had designs that were painted through a stencil cut in oil paper (style originated in the Orient) with a coat of gum arabic to keep the paint from running.

Rebus Valentines had verses in which tiny pictures took the place of some of the words.

An example is:



Puzzle Valentines - Had a puzzle to read and refold, in which scattered among their many folds were verses that had to be read in a certain order. I remember making these in school in which they ended up like a pyramid in which you put your your index finger and thumb of both hands on both sides and moved the puzzle valentine North to South and East To West chanting some silly rhyme until you stopped and could chose a flap to open and read.

Fraktur Valentines - had ornamental lettering in the stle of illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages.

But, Valentines did not always come via paper and lace.

Many sailors would return from their voyages bringing silk scarves (or other items) to their wives or girlfriends that had designs of hearts, flowers and other romantic images or words. And, in return many of the wives or girlfriends of those sailors (before they took off to sea) made them stronger bundles decorated with loving images and thoughts (and filled with items) to take with them on their voyages to think of them.

And during the Civil War some of the Valentines were more like paper dolls that were actually dressed with cloth (or paper) to try to resemble the person sending it.

And during the Roaring Twenties, some valentines were actually shaped like tomatoes. At that time, tomatoes only grew in flower gardens and were considered "love apples." (Kinda makes you wonder what they considered ketchup to be then!).

**5.5 Roses**

Flowers were considered love tokens before there even was a St. Valentines. The Roman God, Bacchus (God of Wine and Joy) and Venus (Goddes of Love and Beauty) both considered the beauty and fragrance of flowers to be tied with romance and love. But since the time of Solomon, the primary flower linked to romance was always the rose. Cleopatra of Egypt covered the floor with roses before receiving Mark Anthony.

A Roman myth is that Cupid was carrying a vase of sweet nectar to the gods on Mt. Olympus and spilled it on the ground. From that spot of spilled nectar, roses grew!

But if roses are so symbolic of romance and love, then why the thorns? Well, another story goes like this: The soft west wind named Sephyr one day opened a lovely rose and Cupid bent over to kiss the elegant petals. When he did, he ws stung by an irate bee hiding inside. Venus got so angry she told Cupid to shoot some bees and string them up on one of his arrows. She then planted this string of dead bees on the rose stems, and the stings became the rose's thorns and ever since roses had thorns.

The ancient Romans also believed that anything discussed under a rose (I mean how low can you go to talk?) was considered sub rosa and to be kept secret. Today the Latin term is still used today to express something that is to be kept confidential.

Another Roman theory is that the Rose reminded the Roman Catholic Church of watching Christians devoured by lions. Later on, the Virgin Mary was called "The Rose of Heaven."

**5.6 Daisies, Violets and Bachelor Buttons**

There are a few other flowers considered to be romantic also.

The Romans believed that the daisy was once a wood nymph. One day, while dancing in a field she was seen by Vertumnus, the God of Spring (who fell in love with her of course). But when he reached for her she got frightened. So, out of pity the other gods let her sink into the earth and she became a daisy.

I do not know how the game of holding a daisy and plucking off it's petals saying "He loves me" or "He loves me not" got started.

As far as Violets go....one day it is said that Venus got jealous of a group of beautiful maidens. And when Cpid refused to say that his mother's beauty was better than theirs, Venus go furious, so she beat her rivals (these maidens) until they were blue and she watched them shrink into violets.

In the Science of Botany, the cornflower is known as Kyanus, named after a Greek youth who was born in a field one day, making garlands of the blue blossoms for the altar of Flora, Goddess of Flowers. He died, unfortnately, leaving some of the garlands undone and so this touched Flora's heart and so in his honor she named the flowers after him.

**5.7 Say It With Flowers...**

This is most commonly known as FTD's slogan today. But what to say and with what flower? Here are some traditional meanings for some other flowers often sent for Valentine's Day or other touching moments:

Bleeding Heart = Hopeless, but not heartless.

Gardenia = I love you secretly.

Gladiolus = You pierce my heart.

Lily-of-the-Valley = Let us make up.

Rose - I love you passionately.

Sweet William = You are gallant, suave and perfect.

Violet = I return your love.

Green leaves represented hope in a love affair. (Often rumored to be the reason why British girls sprinkled bay leaves with rose water and put them on their pillows on Valentine's Day Eve. They wanted to see their loved one in their dreams.)

**5.8 Sweetheart, Sugar Pie, Honey etc.**

When people are in love they just seem to automatically develop this type of dialogue. But why? We often refer to someone we care about as sweetheart or honey. Researchers have found that when we fall in love, a chemical called phenylethylamine or phenylalanine is produced.

This drug is responsible for that erratic, psychotic love high that we all feel. When phenylethylamine or phenylalanine is flowing through our veins it's as if we are on amphetamines. We can stay up all night and work all day the next day. And a pheromone called androstenol is also released, which heightens our sexual attractions. Thus, we also end up producing what is called a sweet taste in our mouths and we start spouting off phrases like "luscious" and "sweet" and "honey" and other things that we like such as "muffin" or "cupcake" or"pudding."

However, there is nothing as bad as love gone wrong! And so then we suddenly start spouting off words that have to do with being disgusted, depressed, angry, bitter etc. These are like, "a sour taste in my mouth" or "foul mood" or even being a little "stinker."

**5.9 Chocolate**

Believe it or not, chocolate contains the same chemical mentioned above called phenylethylamine or phenylaline that is produced in our brains when falling in love, and that gives the same emotional high related to amphetamines.

Many psychologist feel that chocolate is an instant "love booster" and an automatic sweet taste in our mouths. And with some people, both chocolate and love can be addictive.

Anyway, the idea of giving chocolate to someone we care about is a way to stir up the same emotions in them (only artificially if they don't really feel the same way emotionally back) as well. As with all drugs, the phenylethylamine will wear off if it's not produced due to real emotions. Some also say that "sweets for my sweet" is a pun for giving any candy to someone you care about.

**5.10 Love Knots**

It has no beginning and no end and consists of graceful loops (sometimes forming hearts) in which messages of love are either attached and knotted in (or written on the ribbon or rope) and read by turning the knot around and around. And, if you couldn't make a real love knot, then many Valentines included a design of one.

A young man often hung this love knot on his true love's doorknob, slipping a letter under also. (Some feel this began with the sailors since many were skilled at making fishnets and so doing knots or macrame were their skill. Others say it is a celtic custom and design. While others say it is Scandinavian.)

**5.11 Paper Hands**

By the 19th Century another symbol of love became the paper hand. It was considered a symbol of courtship because of the custom of a man "asking for a lady's hand" in marriage. And eventually tiny paper gloves became a valentine card symbol as well....evolving into gloves (esp. silk) becoming a popular gift to for a man to give his sweetheart. Eventually, a woman sort of expected a pair of good gloves as a gift (in she was in certain social circles). Eventually (I guess it depended on how well you knew the woman?) a man would also give shoestrings, silk stockings, garters and jewlery to his sweetheart for Valentines.

**5.12 Valentine Lace**

Expensive Valentines today have real lace, perhaps gold charms, real flowers (or dried) and even made with red velvet and not paper. For thousands of years, certain "pretty things" have often been associated with romance. In the days of olde, knights often rode into battle with his lady love's scarf or ribbon tied somewhere on him. Lace, because of it's delicate nature, has come to represent something lovely to look at and thus represent love (because lace really isn't practical as far as a fabric.) So lace as long as 400 years ago because a popular trimming for clothing...especially clothing associated with love = wedding dresses!

How lace paper got made was purely accidental. Joseph Addenbrooke in 1834 was working for a London paper when by accident a file brushed over a sheet of paper embossed with a raised design. The high points of this embossed design thus got filed off leaving small holes, and giving a lacey look to the paper.

This led into the business of making paper laces and soon others followed --- competitively to the point where some of these paper laces are of museum quality today.

**VI. Saint Valentine’s Poems**

How Do I Love Thee?

Elizabeth Barrett Browning(1806-1861)

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight

For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of every day's

Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.

I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;

I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.

I love thee with the passion put to use

In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.

I love thee with a love I seem to lose

With my lost saints, ---I love thee with the breath,

Smiles, tears, of all my life! ---and if God choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.

False though She Be to Me and Love

William Congreve (1670-1729)

False though she be to me and love,

I'll ne'er pursue revenge;

For still the charmer I approve,

Though I deplore her change.

In hours of bliss we oft have met;

They could not always last;

And though the present I regret,

I'm grateful for the past.

Love's Secret

William Blake (1757-1827)

Never seek to tell thy love,

Love that never told can be;

For the gentle wind doth move

Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love,

I told her all my heart,

Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears.

Ah! she did depart!

A Red, Red Rose

Robert Burns (1759-1796)

O, my luve is like a red, red rose,

That's newly sprung in June.

O, my luve is like the melodie,

That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As far art throu, my bonnie lass,

So deep in luve am I,

And I will luve thee still, my dear,

Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,

And the rocks melt wi' the sun!

And I will luve thee still, my dear,

While the sands o'life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve,

And fare thee weel a while!

And I will come again, my luve,

Tho' it were ten thousand mile!

She dwelt among the untrodden ways

William Woodsworth (1770-1850)

She dwelt among the untrodden ways

Beside the springs of Dove,

A Maid whom there were none to praise

And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone

Half hidden from the eye!

--Fair as a star, when only one

Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown and few could know

When Lucy ceased to be;

But she is in her grave, and, oh,

The difference to me!